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Safety rally...employees of the New York...

[New York]

[1915]

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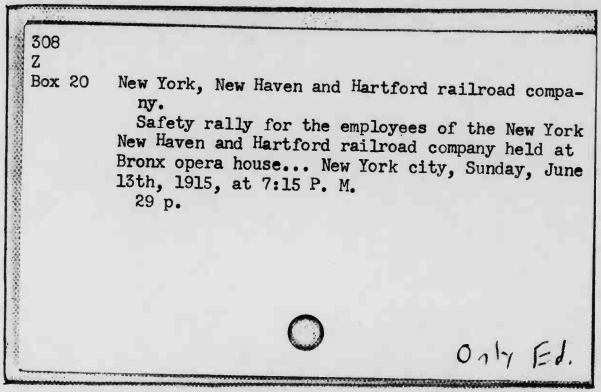
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Box 20
New York, New Haven and Hartford railroad company.
Safety rally for the employees of the New York New Haven and Hartford railroad company held at Bronx opera house... New York city, Sunday, June 13th, 1915, at 7:15 P. M.
29 p.
Only Ed.

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Bureau of Railway Economics
Sept. 18, 1915.

SAFETY RALLY

308
Z
Box 20

for the Employees of

The New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company

Held at

BRONX OPERA HOUSE

436 East 149th Street, near Willis Avenue
New York City

SUNDAY, JUNE 13th, 1915, at 7.15 P. M.

DEC 3 1915 MC

SAFETY RALLY

For the Employees of

The New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad.

BRONX OPERA HOUSE
436 East 149th Street, Near Willis Avenue

SUNDAY, JUNE 13th, 1915, AT 7.15 P. M.

Present: President Howard Elliott, Vice-President A. R. Whaley, Mr. Marcus H. Dow, Mr. E. R. Brumley, Claims Attorney, who acted as Chairman of meeting, various other officers, employees and their families; the estimated attendance being about 2,000.

MR. E. R. BRUMLEY (Chairman of meeting):

"Ladies and gentlemen: This is the third Safety First meeting of a big kind that the New Haven has had and I think it is going to be quite as successful as the other two. The other speakers of the evening will tell you the great work that this movement has done, but there are one or two things that have impressed me here in New York which seem to me peculiarly applicable to New York, and it is about that that I want to speak very briefly. In 1914 the total number of persons killed or injured on railroads in the United States was 79,388. In the course of twenty years the railroads have killed or injured more than 1,000,000 persons. For the first six months in 1914 there were about 600 accidents in New York State on the New Haven alone. For the last six

months of 1914 there were about 700, and the record for the first six months of 1915 will probably be greater than that for either period. In other words, the number of our accidents in this locality, no matter what they may be elsewhere, and no matter what the cause may be, is increasing from year to year, and it is up to us to do something about it, and that is the purpose of this meeting. It has been said that there are lies, damned lies and statistics, but you men and you women who have accidents brought home to you know what they mean. It seems to me that safety in railroad operation depends on two things—safe appliances and safe men. The responsibility for safe appliances rests largely upon those in authority. The responsibility for safe men rests with the men themselves. The Safety First meetings in the various divisions have for their object the improvement of physical conditions. This meeting will attempt to make safe men, but no matter how successful it may seem, it rests with you to understand clearly that railroad work is dangerous, and to make up your mind to do it carefully. This is not at all a question of dollars and cents. It is a question of human life and limb, and you will not get the lesson and purpose of to-night unless the things said here become part and parcel of your daily life and you practice them every minute of your working hours. That is about all that I want to say on that, and I want to conclude with a little statement that appeared some time ago in the *Atlantic Monthly,* which seems to me to apply very well to this meeting and the idea we have here in mind to-night. So intimately related to the conduct and policy of the railroad organization is this matter of efficiency that I think I am justified in applying the memorable words of Abraham Lincoln to the accident situation and in saying that it is now for railroad men themselves to determine 'that these dead shall not have died in vain and that we by our policy and conduct in the future, under God, shall take on a new birth of freedom.'

"When sixteen years old there was a freight brakeman on the old Providence and Worcester Line who made

$1.62 a day; he became a baggagemaster, a passenger and freight conductor, a yardmaster, a trainmaster, general agent at Providence, superintendent of the Worcester Division, superintendent of the New York Division in 1904, and in 1906 was chosen as general representative in charge of the Grand Central Terminal when they began to construct and install the largest electrically operated passenger terminal in the world. On February the 1st, 1913, this man, who had come up from the ranks, took up the duties of Vice-President of The New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad Company, in charge of operation. I take great pleasure in introducing to you our Vice-President, Mr. Whaley. (Applause.)

VICE-PRESIDENT A. R. WHALEY:

"Mr. Chairman, Mr. President, ladies and fellow employees: As the representative of the operating department, I am proud to assume the responsibility for this Safety First organization. We are all very much interested in this work and it is a very great pleasure for me to welcome you on this occasion. This is the first big meeting, as we call it, at which we have had the ladies present. Your committee made no mistake in extending the invitation to the ladies. I think it is eminently fitting that they should be present, and I extend to them a very cordial greeting. This meeting will afford them an opportunity of learning something about the workings of this organization and it comes at a time when we need their help and assistance. Since the Safety First movement has become so active I have had occasion to read and think so much about it that I have more carefully analyzed the reports in order to determine in my own mind what percentage of the accidents were avoidable. It is a pleasure for me to report to you that since the inauguration of this movement on the New Haven Road the number of accidents and number of personal injuries have been reduced. Our Safety First committees are well organized and consist of experienced

men from every department. They have done very active work and we feel that we are obtaining better results almost daily in consequence of having such an organization and the interest taken by our men. I attended a meeting of the central committee in New Haven about a week ago and it was very interesting to note the number of subjects that had been referred by your local committees to the central committee for their consideration and attention. It showed the active interest and attention that is being given to every detail by the entire organization, also the increasing interest shown by all employees of the system. With such interest and activity there is no question but that we will continue to produce good results. With these ideas active in my mind I seldom read an accident report that I am not reminded of the days when I was in the train service, for I know how easy and customary it was for me to do the very things that I am persuading you not to do. I appreciate, perhaps as well as any man in this audience, how easy it is for a man in the active performance of his duty to adopt what he thinks is the easiest way of doing things without full regard, in many instances, for his personal safety, and that is particularly true in all branches of the active railroad service. I remember well in the old days we thought nothing of taking all of the chances which we are urging you to avoid at this time. I remember also how many men were injured in taking those chances, and oftentimes in reflecting on the past I try to figure out in my mind in how many instances accidents would have been avoided had we used the precautionary measures which we are so earnestly recommending to-day. I remember in my own experience of several slight accidents that I know would have been avoided if I had been more careful.

"We are a very busy railroad; we run nearly 1,900 passenger and from 350 to 400 freight trains daily; we are essentially a switching road. In many of our important yards the yard tracks run parallel with and are adjacent to our busy main tracks. Under this condition in the performance of your duties it is necessary to frequently cross the 'fast' or main tracks, and in some instances use them continually in connection with the performance of your yard work. With the number of fast trains running on the main tracks it is very necessary that extra precautions should be taken by every employee to guard against accidents and personal injury. I fully appreciate, based again upon actual experience in a busy freight yard, hustling to handle the maximum amount of business with despatch, how easy it is for a man's mind to become completely absorbed in the particular work that he is doing, but it would seem that, inasmuch as we have these conditions that I mentioned and knowing that they cannot be avoided, our only salvation lies in educating ourselves to accept the situation and exercise every precaution. It further appeals to me that perhaps a little more can be accomplished if we will all assume more individual responsibility not only for our personal safety and welfare, but for the safety and welfare of our fellow employees, particularly the inexperienced or new man, and try to impress upon him the importance of at all times having in his mind the conditions under which he is working and the necessity for using every care to insure his personal safety and the safety of the man with whom he is working. The limited time will not permit me to go into any figures, but I am glad to report that your efforts in the line of Safety First for the past year have greatly reduced the number of accidents and the number of personal injuries. This result is very gratifying and, at the same time, impresses upon us the necessity for increased safety. Having reduced very materially the number of accidents and knowing that many of these accidents would not have happened had the Safety First rules been observed, I am prompted to bring these facts to your attention and in submitting them I ask your serious consideration as to what can be further accomplished in reducing them, believing that such facts will inspire you to greater efforts along the lines of Safety First. Concerted action on the part of everybody must ultimately result in a further substantial reduction,

which is very much to be desired. It is true that nearly every railroad official is promoted from the ranks, and I venture to say that 99 per cent. of them have had the unpleasant experience of notifying the family, either direct or through his organization, of the injury to a husband, father or brother; and I can assure you, based again on actual experience, that it is one of the hardest duties that a railroad official has to perform. No one appreciates what it means to that home more than the official, especially if he has been a long time in the service, because he has undoubtedly had many cases of this kind, and, in many instances, has had the actual experience in his own family. Now what we are trying to do, and what I am going to ask you to help us to do, is to promote and develop all of the things which go to make up this Safety First movement. Just a few more words to the ladies; this is the first time we have had an opportunity to talk to them. It is an undeniable fact that you know the peculiarities of the husband, father or brother better than we do, and equally true that you know whether or not he is inclined to be a little careless or indifferent. In any event, your influence used in trying to impress upon him the importance of safeguarding himself in every way consistent and practical with, or in the performance of, his duty cannot possibly do any harm and may do a lot of good. I know that you fully appreciate what it would mean to you and your family, and if you can impress upon the mind of the railroad man how much more he owes to himself and you in the way of avoiding these accidents it will no doubt stimulate him in entering into the spirit of this Safety First movement with more vim and determination and may be the means of saving both himself and family a great deal of suffering and hardship.

"The object of this Safety First movement is to reduce the number of accidents, realizing fully that the more we can do in advancing and promoting such a movement the less suffering there will be for the employee and his family. We will also secure greater efficiency, we will retain our experienced men in the service, which is very

desirable, and, in the final analysis, it means better and safer service for both the employees and passengers. Every man on this railroad I think appreciates that if we can save one life or one limb or one finger our efforts will be more than justified. No amount of money can ever replace the man or overcome the suffering and hardship experienced by the loss of any man, and we appreciate what such loss means to the family. Our object in having these meetings is to constantly keep in the minds of the men the importance of first, last and always doing everything possible consistent with the service, to promote safety in railroad operation.

"Now I must not take any more of your time, as our program is quite a lengthy one. Our President is here and I know you are all anxious to hear from him, for from him you always hear something interesting and instructive and I am not going to encroach upon the long program. We are also going to try to show to you, through the medium of moving pictures, what actually happens on railroads, hoping it will impress upon us all the importance of everyone doing their part in bringing about the desired result, namely, increasing the safety of the employees and the passengers.

"This is our third big meeting, the first having been held in Boston and the second in New Haven. Right here I want to repeat what I said at the New Haven meeting, namely, that we have as fine a set of men and as good railroad men on the New Haven Road as are employed on any railroad in this country; you have proven your ability, you have demonstrated your loyalty and I am proud of you, and I will vouch for the entire organization being able to meet any emergency which may arise in the future. The question of the number of persons killed and injured on American railroads is a serious matter and something must be done. It is so serious that it is an emergency, because we are wasting too many lives—I think all American railroads are obliged to admit that the record is one of which we have no reason to be proud—and therefore it demands that something be done to make

a better showing if we expect to hold a reputation of being competent railroad officials and employees. The responsibility rests as much with the employee, I think, as it does with the official. The Safety First movement has been inaugurated on nearly all of the well-governed railroads in this country in one form or another. On the New Haven Road we have decided to do the work with our own organization, and we believe that up to this time good results have been accomplished. We believe that there are many more that can be accomplished. Now what I want to ask you to do is to respond to a man to see if the New Haven Road at the expiration of another year cannot show by statistics that we have by harmonious and concerted action and effort on our part been able to make an enviable record and one of which we can justly feel proud. If every man going to make up this railroad organization will seriously consider this matter and work shoulder to shoulder with his fellow employee, helping each other and remembering that the first and greatest benefit is derived by himself and his family there can be no question of the result.

"I want to thank the committee, I want to congratulate you on this turnout, thank you all for coming, and hope you will enjoy the evening and go away impressed with the fact that we are trying to do something to help the railroad. (Applause.)

MR. BRUMLEY: "Mr. Whaley has brought the importance of safety to the employee and to the family of the employee. Now there is another aspect to this whole safety problem, and that is the importance of safety to the public at large, and particularly the traveling public. In 1910, at the Montana State Fair at Helena, a speaker said: 'The railway employee has a responsibility to the railway user to be sober, industrious and careful, so as to furnish the best and safest transportation to the public, and he has a responsibility to the railway owner to furnish a whole day's honest and efficient work for the compensation that he receives, whatever it may be. The industrial supremacy of America cannot be maintained

unless that is done, and every patriotic man, no matter what his employment, should stop waste in labor as well as in material, and expect hard work and rigid economy.'

"At the Waldorf-Astoria, in New York City, on December 11, 1913, the same speaker said: 'If the railways are *quasi* public servants their employees are also *quasi* public servants, and the people should hold the man, as well as the master, to his responsibility.'

"The man who said those things has since gone up and down New England explaining to the people the relation of the public to the railway, the relation of the railway to the public, and how really interdependent they are, and has explained the importance of this whole Safety First movement.

"The man who said those things is Mr. Howard Elliott.

"I take great pleasure in introducing to you our President, Mr. Howard Elliott." (Applause.)

PRESIDENT ELLIOTT:

"Ladies and gentlemen and particularly fellow employees of the New Haven Road, I did not know that Mr. Brumley was to recall some of my previous remarks, one in far off Montana and one here in New York, but before I proceed I want to express my very great appreciation of having met my old friend Bill Pruitt here to-night. I knew him in my old days in Montana, long before either he or I ever expected to speak to New Haven employees in New York City. His music is beautiful and he is a sterling fellow in every way, and I am delighted that he is here to help entertain you to-night.

"It is a very great pleasure to me to come to these Safety First meetings, and, as some of you know, I have been able to attend each one of the large meetings, the one in Boston on January 25th, the other in New Haven on March 14th, and now again here. As Mr. Whaley has already said to you, the officers of the company feel grateful because the wives and daughters, and I presume

the sweethearts of some of the employees, are here. If we can enlist the influence of the women in this Safety First movement we believe they will do a great deal of good in more directions than one, because every good man knows that the influence of a good woman in his life is better than any other influence he can have. When I come to these big Safety meetings I feel that I am just one member of a great family of 35,000 or 36,000 employees. The thought then comes to me, is there one of us who would consciously take a step to do harm or any injury to a member of that great family? Is there one of us who should not, on the other hand, work and think unceasingly to prevent an injury to one of our family? If we would not do an injury consciously we must learn to feel that unconsciously we should not commit any act that would injure one of us. We must learn to breathe Safety, talk Safety, dream Safety if we are to attain the Safety habit, which in time will prevent even an unconscious act of injury to one member of this family. As we all know, most of the deaths and injuries are due to carelessness and disobedience, and to a lack of conscious or unconscious effort for safety. The Safety habit must be part of us if we are to prevent accident and death, which bring misery and sorrow to individuals and families.

"Now, this company has organized Safety Committees upon all of its divisions and they are made up, as you know, of the division officers of all ranks and the men from all departments of the service. We thus get the best co-operative spirit and the best influence, and this is having its effect in many ways; it is having its effect in actual Safety. It is having another effect, in drawing the great family together and making us work more harmoniously for the good of all. We see it in regularity of service. Only a few days ago the report issued by the Public Service Commission of New York announced that the New Haven has been running its trains in and out of New York with such regularity that we have been very close to the top of the list for a number of

months. This is something we ought to be proud of, because the public would much rather have reasonable speed with regularity than very fast speed with irregularity. We want to avoid excessive speed and we do not ask when trains are late that they should be run recklessly simply to make a good record. This regularity of service and that report from the Public Service Commission denote, as I say, closer co-operation.

"One of your speakers told of the officers trying to produce better facilities and how the men are trying to use these facilities to better advantage. Nearly 94 per cent. of the trackage of the New Haven Road is equipped with block signals of one kind or another. That was the record on January 1, 1915, and we are increasing the percentage this year. On that day we had 830.6 miles of track equipped with automatic block signals and 1,870.4 miles with non-automatic, or 2,701 miles altogether. This included the single, double, three- and four-track lines. On 1,065 miles of our track the alternating current was used and the signals were electrically lighted on 530 miles. Of the 276 interlocking signal plants in service 254 were mechanical and 22 were electrical. The total number of working levers in the block-signal system along these lines was 5,415, and the number of switches operated by these signals was 2,097. These are very important elements in your safety and the safety of the public. It has been the effort of the officers to try to so manage, in the last year or two, as to increase your safety and increase the safety of the public. Only recently have we felt that financial conditions were sufficiently clear to warrant an expenditure of something like $600,000 for improved signals this year on the road. In the direction of safer service on our main line for you and those that ride with you, we have also adopted this year a rail that is a little stronger than any ever laid on the New Haven Road. The new rail weighs 107 pounds to the yard—seven pounds more than the old 100-pound rail. These seven pounds are so distributed as to make a little stronger rail. By the end of this year we hope to have

the New York Division, upon which many of you work, equipped with creosoted ties, screw spikes and heavier and modern tie plates.

"We are spending $130,000 for improved rock ballast between Westerly and Kingston on the Providence Division. Three hundred and sixty-two new steel passenger cars have been introduced into the service. This all makes for greater safety—and 100 more cars are coming this year. In our efforts to prevent accidents at stations we have put in improved lights and extended platforms, all in the interest of trying to improve the safety of the company's passengers. Now, as you know, we are making 1,500 or 2,000 efficiency tests each month simply to experiment. These tests tell us where we can find the weak spots, and we can thus get your help to formulate rules that can be reasonably lived up to. Those are some of the physical things of the railroad.

"After all, the railroad is a very human affair and the soul of a railroad is fidelity. The railroad is a great disciplined power, owning rails, cars, locomotives, bridges, stations. It requires the highest quality of mechanical skill and expert knowledge to manage its affairs. The glory of a railroad is the united adjustment of all of its men, who are its nerves, to produce safety and efficiency, economy and courtesy, and the railroad, like a human being, should try every day to do a little better. We, as patriotic American citizens, owe it to our country to do our work just a little better to-day than we did it yesterday, and to do it to-morrow even a little better. Only in that way can we have national efficiency, which is so important, especially at this time, when we are the only great nation that is at peace. Any man that sits back and is perfectly satisfied with what he has accomplished makes very little real progress and improvement; and we, you whom I am speaking to, and all on the New Haven Road, ought not to rest until we make the New Haven the safest road in the country. We must put it in a position so that it can serve the public with the highest efficiency and economy. We can do this with co-

operation and united effort, and if we have the help of our mothers and wives and sisters and all of the good women interested in our welfare and happiness we shall attain that high level of character and success.

"Now, coupled with the Safety movement is the Efficiency movement. As a matter of fact, they go hand in hand, because without efficiency you cannot have safety. This efficiency organization really embraces every employee on the road. Some indications of the work of this organization have from time to time reached the public. You have probably noticed the red and white danger lines painted on the platforms of many stations for the purpose of warning the people of the danger of standing too near the tracks upon which express trains may pass. That method of insuring the safety of the public is being tested as a part of the work of the efficiency organization, and it is only one of numerous safety measures which are constantly under consideration. Mr. Bardo, in a recent Safety circular, said: 'Safety is freedom from hazard, injury or loss, and it is the first duty of every employee to observe the rules and such other precautions as may be necessary to assure himself that all appliances and facilities are in safe condition and used in such a manner as to protect life, limb and property.' The work of the Efficiency organization, covering a very wide field, is not always patent to the public. Part of the work recently has been an examination of every highway crossing at grade, with the object of securing a better view of the tracks by trimming trees, cutting out underbrush and removing buildings and other obstructions.

"You well know accidents are sometimes caused by objects being too near the tracks and proper clearance has to be studied at all times. In the shops there is another problem of Efficiency and Safety, and we have endeavored, during the last year, to study that. We have endeavored at stations to protect baggage trucks, scales and other equipment; to do better work with motor cars, and lately we have started quite a movement in an effort to minimize the dreadful toll of death of trespassers on

the New Haven tracks. Now, while a man running an engine is not morally or legally to blame, still everyone who has had to do with the train service knows how dreadful it is to find that it is too late to avoid striking a trespasser. This Efficiency bureau receives many reports, and all the information on one division is exchanged with all other divisions, so that it can spread the test and the knowledge all over the road.

"Much as we want to make improvements, some of which I have outlined to you, there has been great difficulty in doing so, as the company during the last two years has been in very serious financial condition. For that reason we have been compelled to adopt the most severe economies everywhere and to invent ways to make a dollar go as far as practicable. My own part of the work has been to do what I could by suggesting enthusiasm and a spirit of co-operation and safety and better feeling, not only among our own men, but among the great public of New England, for whom we really are working. For the last five months I have worked to bring about in the Legislatures of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island the passage of laws that if general conditions improve will permit the company to get on a firmer financial basis, a very important thing for us and for the public who use the railroad, because the New Haven is owned in New England, where most of our men live; 75 per cent. of the stock is owned in New England, 15 per cent. in New York and Pennsylvania, and nearly 90 per cent. of the employees live in New England. If we can have a resumption of business and a restoration of confidence and credit the company will in time receive financial support and nourishment from the people along its lines, and this will enable us to make the improvements that mean so much to the daily lives of the men on the road and to the patrons of the road.

"As a slight indication that we have turned the corner, an incident happened only Friday. The company had two notes falling due at certain banks in New England on which we had paid, six months ago, quite a high rate of

interest. We were able to renew those notes yesterday at 2 per cent. less than we paid six months ago. I take this to mean that the company's standing is better and that there is greater confidence in your work and the work of the officers.

"The fact that we obtained the remedial legislation I speak of marks a starting out, I hope, on a course of great constructive work in building up the New Haven Road, the business of New England, and particularly the transportation business of New England. Success in building up the road and making it sound and solid is very vital if New England is to go forward the way we all want it to and thus make it a better place for you and your children and your grandchildren to live in. After all, with those of us beyond forty-five years old, the chief desire of life is to try to adjust our affairs so that those who are dependent upon us can go forward and have a wholesomer, safer and happier life. Our watchwords for every man on the New Haven, whether officer or employee, ought to be efficiency, safety, economy, courtesy and publicity. An essential principle back of the publicity policy of the company is this: If the company is to work out its problems properly it must have the confidence of the public and strive all the time to do better. The fact is that the company endeavors to secure the help of the public in working out these great problems. These problems are very largely the concern of the public. In order to get the help of the public we must tell the public what the difficulties are.

"Every man has different duties to perform, and there are different kinds of work in a great organization like this great family of 36,000 men, but there is truth in the famous saying ascribed to Daniel Webster: 'There is always room at the top.' No matter what place a man fills there is a chance to fill a better one. Look over the list of the railroad officers in the country and you will find that 99 per cent. of them began in the ranks in a very modest capacity. The toastmaster told you about Mr. Whaley; my own work began as a level rodman in North-

western Missouri at the munificent salary of $15.00 a month, and I have been at it thirty-five years. I had the dream of nearly every man, that long before the present time I could take it a little easier and not work so hard; but the older one gets the more one wants to do his or her share in the world.

"There is another matter to-day that strikes me as very important. It is most essential that the spirit of loyalty should be keener and deeper in our minds and hearts; we must be loyal to ourselves, we must be loyal to our jobs, loyal to our families, and we should speak good words and defend ourselves and our jobs and our families and our company; but above all, we must be loyal to our country because she, after all, is the mother of us all, and unless she is well guarded our own daily work could not go on as it should. We must, I repeat, be ever loyal to our country and support wholeheartedly all in authority by being good, wholesome, effective American men and citizens. Personally I do not believe we are to have a serious conflict that means a war, but for all that we owe a stanch loyalty to the country. I do not believe in any crisis that may come to the country there will be found any men who will support it to a higher degree and with greater loyalty than the great party of American railway employees and the employees of the New Haven Road. (Applause.)

"I want to thank you very much for having these meetings. I think they do a great deal of good. I thank you for listening to me, and perhaps I have preached a little sermon, but it is an inspiration to me to come to these meetings, although at times it is difficult, but if we are going to improve this great piece of machinery, The New Haven Road, made up of 36,000 employees and some 45,000 owners, we must encourage the spirit of fidelity, the spirit of loyalty, the spirit of supporting one another, defending one another; we must inspire a true spirit of co-operation to the end that we may do our duty, as I said, to ourselves, to our families, the public whom we

serve and to our country. I thank you very much." (Prolonged applause.)

MR. BRUMLEY:

"We know more thoroughly now, after Mr. Elliott's speech, the great detail of work done by those in authority along the Safety line and along the line of efficiency, and it rests with us who are under those in authority to do our share from day to day in our own way and in our own field. The moving picture called 'Steve Hill's Awakening,' which you will see to-night, was thought out by the General Safety Agent of The New York Central Railroad and staged under his personal direction, to be used in connection with the Safety campaign on the various divisions of the New York Central system. The principal parts are taken by professional actors, and the picture has made a great success. The National Board of Censorship, in writing to the New York Central, said: 'We certainly compliment the New York Central Railroad on this picture and we feel sure it will go a long ways toward driving home what the Safety Department is trying to do.' The New York Central Railroad reports that there has been a general reduction in the number of accidents in all classes of cases; the records showing that there was 273 fewer deaths and 4,030 fewer injuries during the first six months of 1914 over the first six months of 1913. The New York Central Railroad attributes this decrease to the very effective work of its Safety First organization, and the question arises in my mind whether the New Haven, with its Safety First organization under way, is going to let the New York Central get ahead of us. I don't think it is. The General Safety Agent of the New York Central Railroad is going to explain to you more in detail the nature of the work and what it means to the men. I take great pleasure in introducing to you Mr. Marcus H. Dow, General Safety Agent of the New York Central Railroad Company."

MR. MARCUS H. DOW:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I have been asked to talk to you to-night on the subject of Safety and it certainly is inspiring to see so many gathered here in the interest of such a superior purpose as that of saving human life and limb. In the first place I wish to say that railroad work is not the most hazardous of all occupations, because there are at least four other great industries in this country where the number of persons killed per thousand employees is greater than it is on railroads, and railroad casualties form only a part of the total industrial accidents of the country each year. However, the fact must be admitted that there are a great many lives and limbs sacrificed on railroads in accidents which can be prevented, and I hope to point out to you to-night the principal avenue in which your oportunity for successful Safety effort lies. The problem of preventing accidents, or as it has been more commonly termed, the Safety First problem, is now attracting the attention of persons in every walk of life, and the slogan Safety First rings out from coast to coast and from Mexico to Southern Canada. I still believe that there are a great many people who do not understand what this Safety movement is and what has brought it about. Few people realize that in the past there have been upwards of 35,000 persons killed and more than 2,000,000 injured in accidents, industrial accidents if you please, in this country in a single year, and that it was to close the flood-gates upon the surging sea of preventable accidents and educate the employer, the employee and the general public to work together to prevent the sacrifice of the lives and limbs of these persons who form the bone and sinew of our national existence that this movement was started, and so twentieth century progress has placed accident prevention in the foreground, and now industrial concerns everywhere are forming or have formed different plans for work in this field of very laudable endeavor. Two important elements have been brought forward: one of these is the mechan-

ical element, or the guarding of machinery, the installation of safety devices or the correction of physical conditions which, if left uncorrected, might contribute to unsafeness; the other is the human element; and it is this big, powerful, all-important factor that I want to talk to you in particular about to-night.

"For years there has been a nation-wide agitation in behalf of greater safeguards for the employees of railroads, other industries and for the general public. In every State there has been a veritable epidemic of legislation moving toward the protection of the workingman from injury. Safety devices of every description have been installed, rules have been formulated, regulations adopted and laws passed until it would seem as though accidents never could happen. But the disquieting feature of the situation has been that up until about a year ago, in spite of all these extraordinary precautions, taken to insure immunity from harm, accidents have continued to increase steadily, and the very laws that were made to prevent accidents actually seemed to foster them. Now it has remained for the officials of railroads and other great industries to discover where the real trouble lies. The conclusion was reached that with all the laws that might be passed and all the safety devices that might be installed there never could be a successful reduction in accidents until there had been enlisted the co-operation of those persons in whose interest these precautions were being taken. In other words, it was found that the human element was knocking all the carefully laid plans of well-meaning legislators into a cocked hat, and so, within the past few years, this Safety First movement has been started for the purpose of preventing, through co-operation between the employer and the employee, that vast majority of accidents which it was found could not be prevented by any other means.

"The first step taken was to determine the great underlying cause of accidents. A study of the statistics of railroads and other industries showed conclusively that the big majority of accidents were caused by unsafe

practices or the taking of chances. Now what is taking a chance? The answer is, it is a form of gambling. If a man bets on a horse to win a race he puts up his money as a stake and he takes a chance that his horse will win and that he will win a few dollars. On the other hand, if a man drives his automobile over a railroad crossing and does not stop to look and listen he puts up his life and the lives of others who may be in his car as the stake and he takes a chance that no train or engine will happen to come along and strike him and that he will win, and gain what? A few minutes time. He gambles for time and human lives are at stake. Now, then, who are the great American chance-takers? Are they the railroad employees or the mine workers or some other class of industrial employees, or just who are the great American chance-takers? Let us consider this point for a moment to see if we can determine it among ourselves. In the City of New York during the year 1913, according to the Coroner's record, there were 5,750 persons who met violent death in the Borough of Manhattan alone, more than 400 of them on account of being struck or run over by some moving street vehicle, more than 800 on account of falling out of windows and down stairways, etc., more than 200 by accidental drowning and so on down the list.

"In order to determine with what degree of care the average person approaches places of danger I recently caused an investigation to be made of three important railroad crossings; one located at Syracuse, New York; another at Detroit, Michigan, and a third at Indianapolis, Indiana. Careful check was made of every person who crossed the tracks, whether on foot or in a vehicle during a twelve-hour period, and out of 7,779 persons who crossed the tracks would you believe it, only 359 of them, or less than 5 per cent., took the precaution to look both ways before crossing the tracks, and so it seems to me that this habit of chance-taking is not confined to any one class of individuals. The habit of chance-taking is universal; you see it in the person who attempts to cross a crowded street without looking to the right or left; you

see it in the person who does look and then rushes ahead of a car or automobile; you see it in the person who attempts to drive his team or automobile over a railroad crossing and does not stop to look and listen; you see it in the trespasser who voluntarily and needlessly risks his life by going on the railroad tracks where he has no right to be. They are all chance-takers, every one of them. Now, then, to correct and control the human element is the big problem that confronts us in this work of accident prevention. It is my firm conviction that the greatest and most powerful accident preventive influence lies in the education of every human being. Now this work of education may be conducted in various ways, but there is one way in which every railroad man here to-night can take an active part, and that is by cautioning or warning your fellow employees against unsafe practices when such practices are observed. Railroad men, not unlike persons in any other walk of life, become so accustomed to their surroundings that unsafe practices are followed. Most men would know these practices are unsafe if attention were called to them; the railroad officials cannot observe the acts of all employees at all times, therefore it becomes the important duty of every employee to call to the attention of his fellows unsafe practices when such practices are observed, and in order to get results in the prevention of accidents it is necessary for the employee, every one of you, to have the subject of Safety continually in your mind, and instead of waiting for an opportunity to perform a service which might save a life you must keep your eyes open and look for such an opportunity. I don't mean by that that it is always necessary to perform some spectacular act of courage or heroism to save the life of a fellow being, although there have been many heroes in the ranks of railroad men whose acts will live long in our memory as illustrations of heroism and strong devotion to duty, unexcelled even on modern fields of battle, but, as I have said, there are other ways of saving human lives than by such spectacular acts of heroism. I am going to tell a little story which will illus-

trate this point. On one of our divisions not so very long ago a section hand observed two men enter upon the right-of-way from a manufacturing plant located near the tracks and start to take a short cut over a bridge on which the tracks were laid. This section hand stopped those two men and he asked them if they realized that there were more than 5,000 persons killed every year in this country because they persisted in trespassing on the railroad tracks, and even while he was talking to them a fast train rounded the curve and sped by, and the section hand asked those two men if they realized what would have happened to them out on that bridge if he had not stopped and warned them. The two men thanked him, and one, who was a foreman, went back into his mill and preached Safety to his men and warned them against the danger of walking the tracks. Now that little act on the part of that section hand was not hailed in great headlines; that section hand was not proclaimed a hero; but, nevertheless, I say to you that he performed an act as commendable as that of any hero, for in giving that timely, friendly warning, which he considered it his duty to do, he probably not only saved the lives of the two men directly in danger, but he spread the warning to other men. No one can ever know just what results in preventing accidents that simple act on the part of that humble, obscure section hand accomplished, but it was a most commendable thing to do, even though he did not have to risk his life in the saving of another. Now, of course, it sometimes takes courage to do this, but courage, even that which we call physical courage, is not the monopoly of the soldier. Every day in cities, towns and country hamlets, deeds of courage are performed by men and women who never so much as suspect themselves of heroism, and perhaps there is no better illustration than that displayed by the railroad employee, who, in the name of humanity and for the cause of safety, leaps to the side of a chance-taking comrade, who is about to perform some act which jeopardizes his own life or that of another, and with a word of warning insists that that fellow employee

shall stop his unsafe practice. Now perhaps I can better illustrate that point by reading to you a report, or a few paragraphs from the report, of one of our division committees on the New York Central. We require that the members of these committees shall make a report of the number of persons they have cautioned against unsafe practices, stating the practice they were cautioned against. A fireman warned his engineman against backing up and going ahead with his engine before he received the signal from the man on the ground. The warning was received in good spirit and the practice stopped. Hats off to that engineman! He didn't get sore because his fireman pointed out something that was unsafe, but accepted the warning in the spirit in which it was given and he stopped for the sake of Safety. A conductor warned his brakeman not to adjust the coupler on the car until the car was stopped. Another conductor warned his brakeman that when looking for hot boxes when trains were in motion to always look ahead for obstructions before leaning from the side of the car. A workman vigorously cautioned another workman against leaving a plank with nails protruding up lying on the ground where another employee might step on same and injure himself, and so on I might read you hundreds. Now, gentlemen, that is the kind of co-operation that is necessary to make the Safety movement a complete success. The mere slogan Safety First counts for nothing if you do not understand its full meaning and live up to the spirit of it. Safety First! why, they are simply two words which stand for a principle, and if you believe in that principle and believe it is a good thing to live and to live a comfortable life, without being crippled or maimed, if you believe it is better to be careful than crippled, if you believe it is better to cut out unsafe practices than to make widows and orphans, if you believe in that when you must rally to the support of that principle, not only by each and every man being careful yourself, but by doing a systematic, co-operative and constructive work in bringing your fellow employees to the support of that principle, because

upon your fellow employee, to a large degree, depends your own safety, and the thoughtfulness and self-control which guides the careful man in his work must be inculcated by that man into the minds of those who work with him to make the Safety movement a complete success, and that is the message I bring you to-night; and I want to impress upon you that you must look out for the little things. I have prepared a list of some of the little things that I want to call to your attention because they are all important and will illustrate this point that I bring up of looking after the little things. Remember the loose board with a nail projecting upward lying on the ground; the lump of coal, draw bar, pile of cinders or rubbish too close to the tracks where employees work; the loose and flapping doors in moving cars, the hole in the running-board, etc.; the unguarded flywheels, pulleys or galleys; the holes in the floors or tops; insufficient lighting; weak ladder rungs or supports; the broken and burred heads of hammers, chisels or other tools; the lump of coal left lying on the deck of an engine; the unlighted switch stand; the open signal-box; the practice of standing between the rails to get on the footboard of an engine as it approaches, or of coupling up the air hose, or of doing other work between cars without making sure you are protected against movement, or of going between moving cars for any purpose whatever; or of carelessly boarding or alighting from cars. These are all little things, but I say to you that it is the little things that go to make up the big aggregate of accidents, and some of our most serious accidents are caused by the little things. I recall a case in one of our shops where an employee went to get a valve underneath the floor. This valve was located under an opening hardly big enough to admit a man's foot. After he had done his work he went away and forgot to put the cover back on the opening. Within the next hour perhaps a hundred men passed by that hole and not one of them thought to stoop over and put the cover back. Along came an employee walking backwards and stepped one foot into the hole and sustained injuries

from which he died. Remember the little things, the board left lying on the ground with a nail sticking up may seem a trivial matter; you may pass by it and not be injured because you saw it; another employee coming along who is not perhaps as fortunate as you might not see the nail, step upon it and badly injure his foot. The yard brakeman who carelessly leaves part of a coupler lying along the rails of a track may not think his negligence of much consequence, but suppose that another employee riding on the side of a car, perhaps in the dark, should alight from that car and stumble over that obstruction and fall sprawling under the wheels, to be dragged further. He will be a useless, helpless cripple, a sight from which to turn the eyes, a poor, unfortunate wreck of a human being, and all because some thoughtless fellow employee had left material lying where it should not be and did not take the time to remove it. Suppose that should happen—and we all know that it has happened—would it still be a little matter and of no consequence? Oh, no! No, indeed! I think not. And so I say to you, remember the little things, and if you cannot think of the possible suffering you may have to endure because of an act of carelessness, then try and think of those dependent upon you and the hardships they may have to suffer if you sustain an injury that results fatally. I recall a case where a drawhead pulled out of a car in a freight train and the conductor wanted to couple that car back on to the train by means of gears, and so he signaled his engineer to back up with the rest of the train onto this crippled car. Now he didn't want to hit that car too hard and perhaps kick it away a foot or two, which would necessitate a second attempt, and perhaps consume another minute's time, and so, to save that minute's time, he reached in just as the cars were coming together and took hold of the angle cock on the end of the moving car, intending to turn it so as to stop the cars before they hit; but before he could turn that angle cock the cars struck together, catching his head and killing him instantly. That man paid for his carelessness with his life. His body lies

moldering in its grave, while his widow, stifling her sorrow, is trying to support herself and three of the brightest little children that ever graced a home. They are now fatherless because he took a chance just to save a minute's time; and so I ask you to remember the little things, because some of the things that to you may seem the most trivial have been the causes of serious accidents; so try and get into this co-operative educational work among yourselves. But that work of education need not necessarily be confined to your railroad yards. It, in fact, should begin in the public schools and in your own homes, a systematic and persistent training of your children in Safety, teaching them ways of caution that will serve them through all the years of their lives, resulting in a great good in future years, when the children of to-day shall become the parents and breadwinners of the children of to-morrow in the prevention of accidents to those future adults, because of their early training, which taught them the priceless habit of being careful. Why just think of it, according to the Government records, there is a workman injured in this country every sixteen seconds out of every hour, out of every day in the year, and there is a workman killed every fifteen minutes out of every hour out of every day in the year, and it does seem to me that it is largely cause of a careless, thoughtless, indifferent spirit that is bred from childhood and allowed to grow and become a habit, contributing to the annual harvest of killed and injured in a useless, merciless and wholly unnecessary manner. Now we all believe in Safety, I think, and believe it is a good thing; let us then make education our watchword as well as Safety our creed. Let us spread the gospel of Safety broadcast and educate our citizens, not only of the present, but of the future, to think before they act and not go mechanically and irresistibly into danger where danger is known to exist. Let us try and remember that nearly every accident is caused by one of three things: ignorance, thoughtlessness or sheer recklessness. It lies within the power of everyone here to eliminate those three causes as far as

he is individually concerned. Let us do it for humanity's sake and to save the suffering and sorrow that just a little care, just a little thoughtfulness will prevent; and when you go back to your work, either in your yards or upon the road, I ask you to try and take with you that truly American spirit which places humanity above everything else, and may you have burned indelibly upon your minds, as expressive of your earnest and noble desire, these words: For the sake of humanity, care, thoughtfulness, eternal vigilance and persistence without end. And that, my friends, means Safety.

"I thank you. (Applause.)

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